

Moral Values and Moral Purpose: The Missing Links in Failing Schools?

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ABSTRACT School principals today face a number of challenges in their schools. More often, they need to try various strategies to improve the performance in their schools. While many critics can argue for the bringing back of morality and ethics in “messy work places”, others do not concur. Yet, effective principals learn to lead with their staff members. Moreover, it is also crucial for staff members to be involved in bringing about solutions, for this helps them learn that they can address some of their challenges. In this case study a principal of a dysfunctional school used a people-centred approach that emphasised morals, ethics and values to bolster the school’s effectiveness. Using *ubuntu* philosophy, the principal encouraged building of character through values among her teachers. The study showed that school leaders should not overlook working with the people as they create a community of leaders.